New Hampshire Climate Change Policy Task Force
Draft Action Reports Under Development

Transportation and Land Use
Working Group

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Climate Change Action Plan
Transportation and Land Use - Draft Action Report List and Summaries

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TLU Action 1.A.1 - Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards

Summary: Support more stringent, near term Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for passenger vehicles, and inclusion of heavier passenger vehicles (up to 10,000 lbs gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR)) such as large sport utility vehicles and pick up trucks in the standard. In addition, support the adoption of CAFE standards for vehicles greater than 10,000 GVWR in the near future. CAFE is the sales-weighted average fuel economy, expressed in miles per gallon (mpg), of a manufacturer's fleet of light duty vehicles and light duty trucks. It currently applies to vehicles with a GVWR of 8,500 lbs. or less, manufactured for sale in the United States, for any given model year. New standards recently proposed by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)[1] would require that the combined car and light truck fleet meet a 35 mpg average by 2020 (up from current standards of 27.5 mpg for light cars, and 22.2 for light trucks and were set in 1984). Existing analyses indicate that higher fuel economy is achievable with currently available technology and that significant improvements can be made by 2015.

TLU 1.A.2 – Heavy Duty Fuel Economy

Summary: Support establishment of fuel economy standards for all new vehicles greater than 8500 pounds (gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR)) for CO2 reductions from future vehicles and support programs, such as the EPA's SmartWay Transport Partnership program, to increase the fuel economy of the existing heavy duty vehicles. Tractor-trailers consume about 2/3 of all truck fuel and can be made more efficient through aerodynamic retrofits, low rolling resistant tires, and idling reduction technology. Heavy duty vehicles are very durable, many having a useful life of 20 years or more in the U.S. before being sold in other countries. Improvements to the fuel economy of new trucks will have a significant impact 10 to 20 years after implementation of standards, but is likely 10 or more years away from possible implementation. Using existing technology to improve the fuel economy of the existing trucks will have an immediate impact. Action on future and existing trucks will provide both short and long term emission reductions.

TLU Action 1.A.3 - Adoption of CA LEV and GHG Vehicle Tailpipe Standards

Summary: Adopt California Low Emission Vehicle (CALEV) standards including the GHG standards in NH. Under the Clean Air Act Section 209 state's may not develop their own vehicle emission standards. The exception to that rule is the State of California who may set their own standards provided they are at least as stringent as federal standards. CA standards are typically more stringent than federal standards. The remaining 49 states have the option of following federal emission standards or may opt to adopt CALEV standards. The CALEV requirements include a tailpipe GHG standard that does not exist for federal emission standards. CALEV also includes a zero emission vehicle (ZEV) requirement (electric vehicles). States that adopt CALEV standards may opt to include the GHG and ZEV requirements or not. CALEV states only allow the sale of vehicles certified to CALEV standards.

[1] http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/CARS/rules/CAFE/overview.htm

TLU Action 1.B.1 - Vehicle Point of Sale Incentives for Higher Efficiency Vehicles

Summary: The new vehicle point of sale "feebate" would provide a financial incentive to purchase high efficiency / low green house gas (GHG) emitting vehicles and financial disincentive to purchase high GHG emitting vehicles. This is done by providing a rebate on the purchase of high efficiency vehicles and a fee or surcharge on low efficiency vehicles (hence "feebate"). The feebate can be designed to be revenue neutral by using the surcharge paid by low efficiency vehicle purchasers to fund the rebate for high efficiency ones.

TLU Action 1.B.2 – Carbon-Based Vehicle Registration Fees

Summary: This action would create a financial incentive to purchase high efficiency / low green house gas (GHG) emitting vehicles and financial disincentive to purchase high GHG emitting vehicles. This is done by varying the annual vehicle registration based on the efficiency of the vehicle purchased - providing a lower registration fee for higher efficiency vehicles and a higher fee or surcharge on lower efficiency vehicles. The program can be designed to be revenue neutral by using the surcharge paid by low efficiency vehicle purchasers to fund the registration fee reduction for high efficiency ones. Funds collected could also be used to develop transit options.

TLU Action 1.C.1. - Low Carbon Fuel Standard

Summary: A Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) reduces greenhouse gas emissions by ensuring the mix of fuel sold in the NH and Northeast Regional market meet, on average, a declining standard for GHG emissions measured in CO2 equivalent gram per unit of fuel energy sold. The standard will be measured on a lifecycle basis in order to include all emissions from fuel consumption and production, including the "upstream" emissions that are major contributors to the global warming impact of transportation fuels.

TLU Action 1.C.2. - Advanced Technology Vehicles and Infrastructure

Summary: This action would promote development and deployment of alternative fuel vehicles (AFV) and associated fueling infrastructure (natural gas, propane, ethanol, biodiesel, etc.) , and advanced technology vehicles such as hybrid electric vehicles (HEV), plug in hybrids (PHEV), advanced electric vehicles, and fuel cell vehicles (FCV).

TLU Action TLU 1.C.3. - Black Carbon Reduction

Summary: Install retrofit technologies on diesel trucks with a model year of 2006 and older or retire diesel trucks and replace with new technology and cleaner operating engines to achieve reductions of black carbon particulate matter. Install retrofit technologies on diesel non-road equipment including construction equipment, diesel generators, and the like.

TLU Action TLU 1.D.1. – Speed Limits

Summary: Reduce speeds on state and interstate highways either through strict enforcement of the existing speed limit to reduce speeds to 65 mph, or by lowering limits to, and enforcing, a 55 mph speed limit.

TLU Action 1.D.2. – Reduce Vehicle Idling

Summary: Light-duty vehicle idling wastes fuel, damages engines, and results in excess greenhouse gas and criteria air pollutant emissions, while overnight idling associated with long-haul trucking is estimated to consume between five and seven percent of annual heavy truck fuel. To address this issue, the State should implement a robust idling reduction program that targets all vehicles and targets an overall reduction in truck idling of 80% by 2010 and 100% by 2020. This program would utilize a variety of approaches, including regulations, incentives for retrofits, and educational outreach, to reduce the idling time across the state. More specifically the State could adopt regulations and outreach that target excessive idling in light car and trucks when conditions do not dictate the activity. For the trucking industry, recent developments in truck stop electrification (TSE) technology have improved the options for drivers to operate all on-board systems while parked, but without running the engine.

TLU Action 1.D.3. - Improve Traffic Flow

Summary: Revise state and regional guidance and policies to provide for increased emphasis on the consideration and use of modern roundabouts at intersections, synchronization of signalized intersections, and reduction of access points through the use of access management to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion, thus reducing the GHG emissions associated with vehicle travel.

TLU Action 1.D.4 - Motor Vehicle Inspection Programs

Summary: Improve motor vehicle operations and thus vehicle fuel efficiency through continuation of existing vehicle Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) programs including On Board Diagnostics (OBD) for light duty vehicles, and expand implementation of more stringent I/M programs for medium and heavy duty vehicles, including an OBD inspection for these vehicles when national standards are established. A well maintained vehicle operates as a more efficient and less polluting one.

TLU Action 2.A.1 - Commute Trip Reduction Initiative

Summary: Establish a state-supported initiative to increase the number of employers implementing commuter trip reduction programs. Commuter trip reduction programs use a variety of strategies – including parking "cash-out," car/vanpooling, flex time, and telecommuting -- to increase the use of commute and work options that contribute less to climate change than travel by single-occupancy vehicle (SOV). This state initiative would utilize a variety of mechanisms, which could include targeted education and outreach, awards and recognition, and business tax incentives. Could be implemented as part of supporting regional Transportation Management Associations (Action 2.B.2.f).

TLU Action 2.A.2 (cross-ref as 1.D.5) - Congestion Pricing

Summary: Implement congestion pricing on major highways in southern New Hampshire. Congestion pricing discourages highway use during peak hours of highway travel by increasing toll rates for single occupant vehicles at these times. This action could reduce carbon emissions in two ways: (1) by shifting discretionary rush hour highway travel to off peak periods, which would reduce congestion; and (2) by making other transportation modes, such as public transit or car pools, more attractive as a result of increased cost for a single occupant vehicle to use the facility. Reduced or free access could also be provided for High Occupancy

Vehicles (HOV's) during peak periods. Funds raised by increasing tolls during peak periods could be directed toward development/expansion or subsidization of public transit systems, if appropriate legislation were approved to do so.

TLU Action 2.A.3 - Vehicle miles traveled-based insurance premium structure

Summary: Create an incentive for consumer to drive less to reduce the cost of their insurance. Some portion of the annual insurance premium would be based on the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the previous year above a standard minimum (e.g., 10,000 miles per year). VMT would be determined based on an odometer-reading (performed with the annual inspection). Consumers would have an incentive to make more efficient travel decisions and location choices (e.g., living closer to work and services) and thus reduce VMT.

TLU Action 2.A.4 - Vehicle miles traveled-based vehicle registration fees

Summary: Create an incentive for consumer to drive less to reduce the cost of their vehicle registration. Some portion (or all) of the annual vehicle registration would be based on the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) above a minimum level in the previous year (e.g., 10,000 miles per year). VMT would be determined by an odometer-reading performed with the annual inspection. Consumers would have an incentive to make more efficient travel decisions and location choices (e.g., living closer to work and services) and thus reduce VMT.

TLU Action 2.A.5 - Increase State Gasoline Tax

Summary: Increase the New Hampshire's gasoline tax (and consequently the price of gasoline) substantially (on the order of $1-2 per gallon) to increase the cost of driving and encourage behavior modifications to reduce vehicle miles traveled (e.g., reduced vehicle travel, increased use of public transportation). The gasoline tax is currently $0.18 per gallon, is not indexed to inflation, and has not been changed since 1991.

TLU Action TLU 2.A.6. - Fuel Carbon Surcharge

Summary: Apply a higher fuel tax to motor vehicle fuels that have a high carbon intensity, to make these fuels more costly to use, thus providing an incentive for development and use of advanced technologies and lower carbon fuels.

TLU Action 2.A.7 - Reduced parking availability/eliminate free & cheap public parking

Summary: Establish a state-supported initiative to promote the reduction in the availability of free and inexpensive parking to create a disincentive for travel by single-occupancy vehicle and provide an incentive for greater use of public transportation to access services. Such action would reduce vehicle miles traveled and encourage more efficient location choices that facilitate access to activities and services without a vehicle and parking.

TLU Action 2.B.1.a - Expand Local/Intra-Regional Transit (Bus) Service

Summary: Expand the service areas of existing local and intra-regional transit (bus) systems and create new systems to: (1) provide service for all communities with 20,000 or more population; (2) provide service connections for all communities having 10,000 or more population AND a defined, walkable, mixed-use center area (of at least 100 acres); (3) extend existing local/intra-regional transit systems serving NH's largest cities and areas (Manchester, Nashua, Concord, Coast) to provide connections to surrounding communities; and (4) identify and implement additional local transit options over time.

TLU Action 2.B.1.b - Improve Existing Local Transit (Bus) Service to Increase Ridership

Summary: New Hampshire would improve existing local bus service within New Hampshire on ***existing routes*** by providing more frequent service, improving passenger amenities and facilities, and increasing marketing to increase ridership.

TLU Action 2.B.1.c - Expand and improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure

Summary: Improve and expand bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to increase the viability of these travel modes as options for shorter-distance local trips, particularly within existing community centers, around transit-access points, and other areas of higher-density, compact, mixed use development.

TLU Actions 2.B.2.a - Maintain and Expand Passenger Rail Service

Summary: Maintain and expand passenger rail service within the state as part of a balanced state-wide multi-modal transportation system that keeps NH competitive with and accessible to the region. Initial actions focus on sustaining and improving existing passenger rail service; near-term/mid-term actions focus on improvements and expansions within NH's primary travel corridors (I-93 to Manchester/Concord and I-95); long-term actions involve providing passenger rail service throughout NH.

TLU Action 2.B.2.b - Maintain and Expand Freight Rail Service

Summary: Maintain and expand freight rail service within the state as part of a balanced state-wide multi-modal transportation system that keeps NH competitive with and accessible to the region. Initial actions focus on sustaining and improving existing freight rail service; near-term/mid-term actions include strategic improvements and expansions to increase freight rail usage; and long-term actions involves providing for freight rail service throughout NH.

TLU Action 2.B.2.c - Implement dedicated funding stream to support public transportation

Summary: Identify and implement a dedicated funding stream to support significant expansion of public transportation. The lack of adequate funding is a major impediment to the expansion and operation of public transportation. Public transportation is essential to establishing a balanced, less carbon-intensive transportation system and also promotes and supports low-GHG impact development.

TLU Action 2.B.2.d - Implementation of the Selected Alternative from the I-93 Transit Investment Study

Summary: Implement the recommendations of the I-93 Transit Investment Study, which NHDOT expects to finalize in the summer of 2008. The I-93 Transit Investment Study is an effort to identify a long-term vision of transit investments that are needed and feasible to accommodate and diversify future travel demand in the I-93 corridor from Boston to Manchester. Rail, bus, and ridesharing strategies are being investigated to promote alternatives to single occupant vehicle travel within the corridor.

TLU Action 2.B.2.e - Expand Park-and-Ride Infrastructure

Summary: Expand and improve New Hampshire's Park-and-Ride infrastructure to support bus transit and carpooling by creating new park-and-ride lots in new locations, expanding existing facilities nearing capacity, improving the services provided at these facilities (e.g., improved shelters and restroom facilities, increased security, walkable connections to adjoining developed land uses), and expanding marketing efforts to promote use of the facilities.

TLU Action 2.B.2.f - State financial support of transportation management associations

Summary: Provide state-funded technical and financial support to establish and operate Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) in major employment centers/areas within NH. A Transportation Management Association is a collective non-profit organization of private corporations and public agencies that works to reduce traffic congestion, improve mobility and air quality, and educate employers and their employees about transportation alternatives. TMAs can be an appropriate vehicle for promoting Commuter Trip Reduction Programs with employers (Action 2.A.1) and establishing/improving local/intra-regional bus services (Actions 2.B.1.a and 2.B.1.b).

TLU Action 2.B.2.g - Expand Inter-city Bus Service

Summary: Increase access to inter-city bus service for connections within New Hampshire to reduce vehicle travel associated with longer-distance, in-state trips and help connect more passengers to other non-vehicle travel modes (e.g., air, rail) for out-of-state travel. Expand inter-city bus service to (1) provide service (within 10 miles) to all communities of greater than 5,000 population and along corridors with 10,000+ average daily traffic; (2) provide service to key destinations (e.g., Manchester airport); and (3) provide connections between significant economic centers within NH and to areas that develop with sufficient density and uses to facilitate transit service.

TLU Action 2.B.2.h - Improve Existing Inter-city Bus Service

Summary: Improve the quality of facilities and increase the frequency of service on **current** inter-city bus services within New Hampshire to increase ridership levels, thus reducing VMT and vehicle-related carbon emissions. Improves **existing** inter-city bus service to provide (1) higher-quality bus stops and terminals with additional services and amenities; (2) improved and additional public intermodal facilities, shared with local and other inter-city providers to facilitate connections; (3) increased the frequency of service; and (4) improved connections to surrounding areas through improved walkability and easy access to local transit.

TLU Action 2.C.1.a - GHG Development Impact Fees

Summary: Assess an impact fee for all new development seeking a state permit based on the GHG-impact of the project (based on estimated transportation demand generated by the project) and/or enable municipalities to adopt similar programs. The new impact fee would encourage lower GHG-impact development, such as compact, mixed use, walkable development in existing community centers. Funds raised by the impact fee could be used to support public transit or other GHG offsets to ensure "carbon neutrality" of new state-permitted development.

TLU Action 2.C.1.b - Streamline Approvals for Low-GHG Development Projects

Summary: Adopt new policies to streamline permit review processes, apply alternative requirements, or otherwise reduce barriers for development projects in *existing* community centers with low-GHG footprints. Conduct a broad evaluation of state permit processes and requirements to identify barriers that now deter development from locating in low-GHG impact areas, including existing downtowns and community centers, and develop practical solutions. Encourage municipalities to adopt similar strategies in their development ordinances and permit processes.

TLU Action 2.C.2 - Apply Standardized State Overlay Zoning for Higher-Density, Mixed Use, Walkable Design Development around Transit Stations (Rail and Bus)

Summary: Develop model zoning and regulations or standards that ensure that land use around bus/rail service access points will maximize ridership and potential GHG reductions and encourage/assist (or require) municipalities to adapt and implement the model zoning and regulations around bus/rail stations. The model language or standards would define criteria for minimum development density, a mix of land uses, and an interconnected walkable street pattern. Grants for specific technical assistance to support implementation could be awarded to communities (under Action 2.C.8) and/or incentives implemented to promote adoption (e.g., access to additional state grants under Action 2.C.4).

TLU Action 2.C.3 - Develop Standardized (Model) Zoning for Higher-Density, Mixed Use, Walkable Design Development and Encourage (or Require) Municipal Adoption

Summary: Develop model zoning and regulations to promote and facilitate higher-density, mixed-use, walkable development (including affordable housing) in focused areas designated by a community. Areas developed with these characteristics have a lower GHG impact than other forms of development (e.g., they generate fewer car trips, shorter trips, and a smaller development footprint per unit). Encourage/assist (or require) municipalities to adapt and implement the model zoning and regulations. Grants for specific technical assistance to support implementation could be awarded to communities (under Action 2.C.8) and/or incentives implemented to promote adoption (e.g., access to additional state grants under Action 2.C.4).

TLU Action 2.C.4 - Direct State Funding and Grants Toward Communities with Areas Targeted for Low GHG-Impact Development

Summary: Through the provision of state funding and grants, encourage municipalities to adopt changes in local land use zoning and to promote Low GHG-Impact Development (such as by adopting standards proposed by Actions 2.C.2 and 2.C.3). Municipalities that adopt appropriate land use regulations would be given priority under existing state funding and grant programs by adding new criteria to existing competitive grant evaluation and/or requiring the establishment of a Low GHG-Impact Development zoned area as a prerequisite to receiving funding.

TLU Action 2.C.5 -Apply/Enable a Two-Rate Tax Structure Based on GHG-Impact

Summary: Enable municipalities to reduce the tax burden on new development located in areas with a lower GHG-impact (e.g., areas of higher-density, with a mix of uses, and serviced by transit) and utilizing GHG-reducing features (e.g., walkable, energy efficient design) as a means of encouraging this type and location of development. Alternatively (or additionally), state government could apply a lower tax rate to development (new and/or existing) located in areas meeting specified criteria and/or for development implementing certain GHG-reducing features. The adjusted tax rate would reflect the higher cost of municipal services and ecosystem impacts of "sprawl development." A higher tax rate would complement GHG-based impact fees by offering a recurring cost for buyers associated with that development location choice.

TLU Action 2.C.6 - Promote availability and use of location efficient mortgages

Summary: Explore the potential to expand the availability of Location Efficient Mortgages (LEM), which are designed to recognize the reduced transportation costs associated with living in a compact, mixed-used, walkable area (with close proximity to necessary services and employment) and/or availability of public transportation, thus encouraging development in such areas and potentially increasing the affordability of living closer to work and services.

TLU Action 2.C.7 - Establish Statewide or Regional Entity(ies) to Promote and Facilitate Transfer of Development/Density Transfer Credit Programs

Summary: Establish an educational and administrative-support entity (at state or regional level) to facilitate implementation of transfer of development rights (TDR) or density transfer credit programs, in which open space is preserved in targeted areas in exchange for higher-density development in designated areas. A regional or state organization would be tasked with promoting this tool, assisting communities to develop and adopt the necessary zoning and regulations, and in implementing the program at the municipal level (e.g., valuing "density" to be transferred, processing transactions). A successful TDR program can facilitate the creation of compact land use patterns that reduce transportation energy consumption, reduce municipal infrastructure delivery costs and energy consumption, preserve rural open space, and support public transportation.

TLU Action 2.C.8 - Continue and Expand Marketing, Education and Technical Assistance to Municipalities

Summary: Support and expand the available funding and technical assistance made available through existing programs to support coordinated local planning for land use, transportation and the environment and to implement policy changes at the local level to promote land use with reduced GHG impacts. Update existing publications where appropriate to incorporate GHG considerations and prepare new materials where needed. Provides increased coordination between and expansion of existing programs now implemented by various agencies such as the Office of Energy and Planning, the Department of Environmental Services and the Regional Planning Organizations, as well as professional and other associations such as the NH Planners Association, Local Government Center, UNH Cooperative Extension, and Clean Air Cool Planet.